

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed December 4, 2002, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration.

IN THE DRAWINGS

Under a separate letter to the Official Draftsperson, Applicant has proposed amendments to Figs. 1, 7, 15, 17 and 18, as illustrated on the Marked-Up copies of these figures enclosed herewith. Further, Applicant submits formal drawings herewith that include these proposed amendments. No new matter has been added by any of these amendments. The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve these amendments and to accept the formal drawings.

IN THE WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

In response to ¶1 of the Office Action, Applicant proposes amendments to page 1 of the written description to update the serial numbers of the co-related applications, as illustrated in the attachment hereto titled "Marked-Up Written Description".

In response to ¶2 of the Office Action, Applicant proposes amendments that remove the embedded hyperlinks found on page 1 of the written description, as illustrated in the Marked-Up Written Description attachment.

To further the prosecution of this application, other amendments have been made to the written description as illustrated in the Marked-Up Written Description attachment. Some of these amendments correct either typographical or grammatical errors. Other of these amendments add language which is clearly supported by the figures, yet others add language that is supported by the figures. Other amendments merely correct incorrect citations to numerical references found in the figures.

No new matter has been added by any of the above amendments. The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve these amendments.

IN THE CLAIMS

To further the prosecution of this application, amendments have been made in the claims, as illustrated in the attachment hereto titled "Marked-up Claims."

Claims 1-13 were previously pending in this application. By this amendment, Applicants amend claims 1-13 and add claims 14-43. As a result, claims 1-43 are pending for examination, of which claims 1, 11, 12 and 13 are independent.

1. Telephone Interview with Examiner

Applicant's representatives appreciate the courtesies of Examiners Stimpak in granting and conducting a telephone interview on April 3, 2003. The participants in the telephone interview included Examiner Stimpak, Examiner Diaz, and Applicant's representatives, Steven J. Henry and Daniel P. McLoughlin. During this telephone interview, agreement was reached that the independent claims as originally filed patentably distinguish over "Collaborative Reputation Mechanisms in Electronic Marketplaces" by Giorgos C. Zacharia and patentably distinguish over U.S. Patent No. 6,112,186 (Bergh), for reasons described in more detail below.

Accordingly, the rejections of claims 1, 5, 6, 7 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Zacharia will be withdrawn. Further, the rejections of claims 1-5 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Bergh will be withdrawn. Applicant appreciates, however, that additional prior art searching may be performed by Examiner Stimpak as a result of Applicant's traversal of the §102 rejections.

Matters discussed during the telephone interview are described at various locations below. It should be appreciated that any description herein of matters discussed during the telephone interview is merely a summary of the telephone interview, and is not intended to describe in exact detail everything that was discussed during the telephone interview.

2. Claims 1-10 as Amended Overcome the Claim Objections

In response to the objections raised in ¶3 of the Office Action, Applicant has amended claims 5 and 6 as illustrated in the Marked-Up Claims attachment to read as shown above. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 5 and 6 as amended overcome these objections, and requests that the rejections to claims 5 and 6 set forth in paragraph three of the Office Action be withdrawn.

Claims 1-10 stand objected-to (Office Action, ¶4) because the use of the word "act" in each of these claims is allegedly awkward. Applicant respectfully disagrees for the following reasons.

35 U.S.C. §112, ¶6, specifies that:

“An element in a claim for a combination may be expressed as a means or step for performing a specified function without the recital of structure, material, or acts in support thereof, and such claims shall be construed to cover the corresponding structure, material, or acts described in the specification and equivalents thereof.”
[emphasis added]

Accordingly, Applicant has drafted claims 1-10 to include the word “act” as opposed to the word “step” to make clear that none of claims 1-10 are “step for” claims as defined under §112, ¶6.

Further, Applicants understand that it is customary to use the word “step” as opposed to the word “act” in method claims, and that this may be the reason the Examiner finds the word “awkward”. Applicants respectfully submit, however, that the use of the word “act” in a method claim is not awkward per se, but merely less familiar to the Examiner than the use of the word “step”.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the objections to claims 1-10 under paragraph four of the Office Action be withdrawn.

3. Claims 4 and 5 as Amended Satisfy the Requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

In response to the rejections of claims 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2, Applicants have amended claims 4 and 5 as illustrated in the Marked-Up Claims attachment to read as shown above. Applicants respectfully submit that there is proper antecedent basis for all terms recited in claims 4 and 5 as amended and that these amended claims satisfy the requirements of §112, ¶2. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 4 and 5 under §112, ¶2 be withdrawn.

4. Claims 1-10 as Amended Recite Statutory Subject Matter Under 35 U.S.C. §101

Claims 1-10 stand rejected (Office Action, ¶7) under 35 U.S.C. §101 as purportedly claiming inventions directed to non-statutory subject matter. Although Applicants respectfully disagree, because claim 1 as filed recites statutory subject matter, Applicants have amended claim 1 to further the prosecution of this application. As agreed during the telephone interview, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the term --computer-implemented—before the term

“acts” in claim 1 to make clear that every act recited in claim 1 is implemented by a computer.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 as amended recites statutory subject matter under 35 U.S.C. §101. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1-10 under §101 be withdrawn.

5. Claims 1-10 and 14-17 Patentably Distinguish Over Zacharia

Claims 1-10 stand rejected (Office Action, ¶9) under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as purportedly being anticipated by Zacharia. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

5.1 Discussion of Zacharia

Zacharia is directed to collaborative reputation mechanisms for electronic market places. Zacharia discloses a reputation mechanism called “Sporas”. Sporas generates a ratee reputation (R_{t+1}) of a first entity by combining: a first rating (W_{t+1}) of the first entity provided by a second entity; and a first *ratee* reputation (R_{t+1}^{others}) of the second entity. (Page 3, second column, line 28-page 4, second column, line 15; Equation 1; Figure 1). The Sporas reputation mechanism is further described in the Background of the present application.

As discussed during the telephone interview, and as disclosed in the Summary of the present application, a problem with Sporas is that only a *single* value is used to represent both the reputation of an entity as a ratee (i.e., based on ratings of the entity provided by others), and as a rater of other entities (i.e., based on ratings of others provided by the entity). Further, Sporas uses this single reputation value of an entity to weight ratings of others provided by the entity.

Thus, Sporas fails to disclose that the reputation of an entity based on the opinion of others is independent of the reputation of the entity *as a qualitative rater of other entities*. Further, Sporas fails to disclose combining ratings of others provided by the entity with the reputation of the entity as a qualitative rater of other entities, as opposed to combining such ratings with the reputation of the entity based on the opinions of others.

In short, Sporas fails to disclose determining a rater reputation or using a *rater* reputation of an entity to generate the ratee reputation of another entity.

5.2. Claim 1 is Not Anticipated By Zacharia

As agreed during the telephone interview, claim 1 as originally filed patentably distinguishes over both Zacharia and Bergh. Claim 1 has been amended to include the term --

computer-implemented-- in response to the §101 rejection, and claim 1 has further been amended for clarification. None of these amendments were made in response to either of the §102 rejections, nor to patentably distinguish over any of the art of record.

As agreed during the telephone interview, claim 1 is not anticipated by Zacharia because Zacharia fails to disclose a method of ascribing a ratee reputation to a first entity, comprising computer-implemented acts of: receiving a first rating of the first entity by a second entity; accessing a first rater reputation representing a reputation of the second entity *as a qualitative rater of other entities*; and generating a ratee reputation of the first entity, comprising combining the first rater reputation and the first rating.

As discussed above, Zacharia fails to disclose combining a first rating provided by a second entity with a rater reputation of the second entity. In contrast, Zacharia discloses combining such first rating with a *ratee* reputation of the second entity.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 1 is not anticipated by Zacharia. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 1 under §102(a) as being anticipated by Zacharia be withdrawn.

Claims 2-10 and 14-17, which each depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, patentably distinguish over the art of record for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of claims 2-10 under §102(a) as being anticipated by Zacharia be withdrawn.

6. Claims 1-10 and 14-17 Patentably Distinguish Over Bergh

Claims 1-10 stand rejected (Office Action, ¶10) under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as purportedly being anticipated by Bergh. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

6.1 Discussion of Bergh

Bergh discloses a system for facilitating the exchange of user information and opinion. The system includes memory elements for storing user profiles and item profiles. The system also includes a calculator for calculating similarity factors between users and a selector for selecting neighboring users for each user based on the similarity factors. The system assigns a weight to each one of the neighboring users and uses the ratings given to the items by those

neighboring users to recommend an item to the user. (Column 2, lines 21-30; FIGs. 1, 3; col. 11, lines 45-54).

Contrary to the assertions of the Office Action, Bergh does not disclose generating a ratee reputation of a first entity, (e.g., a first user), but in contrast discloses generating a recommendation of an *item*. Further, Bergh does not disclose combining a rating provided by the neighboring user with a *rater* reputation of the neighboring user. In contrast, Bergh discloses combining such rating with a weight representing the similarity between the neighboring user's profile and the profile of the user for which a recommendation is being provided.

6.2 Claim 1 is Not Anticipated by Bergh

As agreed during the telephone interview, claim 1 is not anticipated by Bergh because Bergh does not disclose a computer-implemented method of ascribing a ratee reputation to a first entity, comprising computer-implemented acts of; receiving a first rating of the first entity by a second entity; accessing a first rater reputation representing a reputation of the second entity *as a qualitative rater of other entities*; and generating a ratee reputation of the first entity, comprising combining the first rater reputation and the first rating, as recited in claim 1.

As discussed above, Bergh does not disclose generating a ratee reputation of a first entity by combining a rating of the first entity with a *rater* reputation of a second entity, but, in contrast, discloses generating a recommendation of an *item* by combining a rating of the item by a second entity with a weighting value representing the similarity between the second entity and the first entity.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 1 is not anticipated by Bergh. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 1 under §102(e) as being anticipated by Bergh be withdrawn.

Claims 2-10 and 14-17, which each depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, patentably distinguish over the art of record for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of claims 2-10 under §102(e) as being anticipated by Bergh be withdrawn.

7. Claims 11 and 18-30 Patentably distinguishes over Zacharia and Bergh

Claim 11 has been amended for clarification. None of the amendments to claim 11 were made in response to either of the §102 rejections of claim 11, nor to patentably distinguish over any of the art of record.

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as purportedly being anticipated by Zacharia. Further, claim 11 stands rejected under §102(e) as purportedly being anticipated by Bergh. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

As agreed during the telephone interview, claim 11 is not anticipated by either Zacharia or Bergh because neither Zacharia nor Bergh disclose a system for ascribing a ratee reputation to a first entity, the system comprising a ratee reputation generator to receive as input a first rating of the first entity by a second entity, to access a first rater reputation representing a reputation of the second entity *as a qualitative rater of other entities*, to generate a ratee reputation of the first entity by combining the first rater reputation and the first rating, and to provide as output the generated ratee reputation.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 11 is not anticipated by Zacharia under §102(b) or Bergh under §102(e). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claim 11 under §102(a) as being anticipated by Zacharia and under §102(e) as being anticipated by Bergh be withdrawn.

Claims 18-30, which each depend directly or indirectly from claim 11, patentably distinguish over the art of record for at least the same reasons as claim 11. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are in condition for allowance.

8. Claim 12 Patentably Distinguishes Over Zacharia and Bergh

Claim 12 has been amended for clarification. None of the amendments to claim 12 were made in response to either of the §102 rejections of claim 12, nor to patentably distinguish over any of the art of record.

Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as purportedly being anticipated by Zacharia. Further, claim 12 stands rejected under §102(e) as purportedly being anticipated by Bergh. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

As agreed during the telephone interview, claim 12 is not anticipated by either Zacharia or Bergh because neither Zacharia nor Bergh disclose a system for ascribing a ratee reputation to

a first entity, the system comprising: means for receiving a first rating of the first entity by a second entity; means for accessing a first rater reputation representing a reputation of the second entity *as a qualitative rater of other entities*; and means for generating a ratee reputation of the first entity by combining the first rater reputation and the first rating.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 12 is not anticipated by Zacharia under §102(b) or Bergh under §102(e). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claim 12 under §102(a) as being anticipated by Zacharia and under §102(e) as being anticipated by Bergh be withdrawn.

9. Claim 13 and 31-43 Patentably Distinguishes Over Zacharia and Bergh

Claim 13 has been amended for clarification. None of the amendments to claim 13 were made in response to either of the §102 rejections of claim 13, nor to patentably distinguish over any of the art of record.

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as purportedly being anticipated by Zacharia. Further, claim 13 stands rejected under §102(e) as purportedly being anticipated by Bergh. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

As agreed during the telephone interview, claim 13 is not anticipated by either Zacharia or Bergh because neither Zacharia nor Bergh disclose a computer program product comprising a computer readable medium and computer readable signals stored on the computer readable medium that define instructions that, as a result of being executed by a computer, instruct the computer to perform a method of ascribing a ratee reputation to a first entity, the method comprising: receiving a first rating of the first entity by a second entity; accessing a first rater reputation representing a reputation of the second entity *as a qualitative rater of other entities*; and generating a ratee reputation of the first entity.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 13 is not anticipated by Zacharia under §102(b) or Bergh under §102(e). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claim 13 under §102(a) as being anticipated by Zacharia and under §102(e) as being anticipated by Bergh be withdrawn.

Claims 31-43, which each depend directly or indirectly from claim 13, patentably distinguish over the art of record for at least the same reasons as claim 13. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are in condition for allowance.

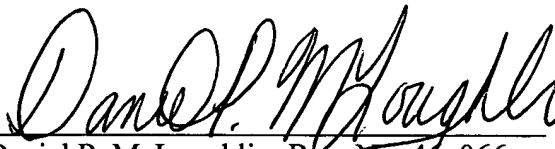
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted,
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Docket No.: 000220.70006.US

Date: April 4, 2003

xApril 4, 2003x

MARKED-UP WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 1, line 9 to read as follows:

Further, each of the following related commonly-owned U.S. patent applications: U.S. Application Serial No. 09/710,008 (Attorney Docket No. 000220.70001.US), titled "Method and System for Ascribing a Reputation to an Entity as a Rater of Other Entities" by Giorgos Zacharia and Dmitry Tkach, U.S. Application Serial No. 09/709,989 (Attorney Docket No. 000220.70002.US), titled "Method and System for Ascribing a Reputation to an Entity from the Perspective of Another Entity" by Giorgos Zacharia, U.S. Application Serial No. 09/710,498 (Attorney Docket No. 000220.70003.US), titled "System and Method for Estimating the Impacts of Multiple Ratings on a Result" by Giorgos Zacharia, and U.S. Application Serial No. 09/710,289 (Attorney Docket No. 000220.70007.US), titled "System and Method for Recursively Estimating a Reputation of an Entity" by Giorgos Zacharia, each application filed on [even date herewith] November 10, 2000, is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 1, line 19 to read as follows:

The emergence of the Internet and other large networks has increased both the number and kinds of electronic exchanges between entities. As used herein, an electronic exchange is any exchange between two or more entities over an electronic network (i.e., not in person) such as, for example, a voice communications network (e.g., POTS or PBX) or a data communications network (e.g., LAN or the Internet) or a voice-and-data communications network (e.g., voice-over-IP network). Electronic exchanges may include electronic business transactions and electronic communications. Such electronic business transactions may include the negotiation and closing of a sale of goods or services, including solicitation of customers, making an offer and accepting an offer. For example, in consumer-to-consumer electronic marketplaces (e.g., the eBay, OnSale, Yahoo and Amazon marketplaces found on the global Internet, [at the following respective URLs: www.ebay.com, www.onsale.com, www.yahoo.com, and www.amazon.com]) entities may transact for the sale and purchase of goods or services.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 5, line 28 to read as follows:

To determine a personalized reputation of a first entity from the perspective of a second entity, the first and second entity must be "connected". A first and second entity are connected if

a rating path connects the first and second entity. A rating path is a series of rating links that connect a first entity to a second entity. For example, in Fig. 1, entities A_1 and A_{11} are connected by several rating paths, including rating paths 312 and 314. Rating path 312 includes rating links 302, 304 and 310 [312], and rating path 314 includes rating links 302, 306 and 308.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 11, line 7 to read as follows:

In an aspect of determining a rater reputation of an entity, the result of the comparison of (a) the rating provided by the first [rating] rater of a rated entity and (b) other ratings of the rated entity provided by other raters may be weighed over a ratee reputation deviation of the rated entity, as will be described in more detail below in relation to Fig. 5. This ratee reputation deviation represents a deviation of ratings of the rated entity from an expected value of the rating of the rated entity. Entities whose ratee reputations fluctuate over a wide range of values, such as new entities and entities that receive a wide range of ratings (i.e., unstable entities), typically have high ratee reputation deviations. This weighting of the comparison results in a rating predictability that is greater for greater values of ratee reputation deviation and less for lesser values of ratee reputation deviation.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 16, line 12 to read as follows:

Alternatively, if the first entity has provided other [rating] ratings of other entities, and rating predictabilities have been generated from these other ratings (e.g., by performing Acts 2 and 4 on the provided ratings), then, in Act 5, the other rating predictabilities may be combined with the rating predictability generated in Act 4 to produce the rater reputation of the first entity. Act 5 may be implemented in any of several different ways. In one implementation, Act 5 may be implemented by averaging all of the generated rating predictabilities associated with each rating provided by the first entity. Accordingly, a rater reputation may be determined by applying the following equation:

$$\text{Equation 11: } R^{\text{rater}} = \frac{1}{n} \circ \sum_{j=1}^n P_j(X),$$

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 20, line 23 to read as follows:

For example, if rater reputations are being determined for the rating entities that provided the most recent 20 ratings, then, $M=[1] \underline{20}$. For the rating entity that provided the earliest rating, $m = 20$ and $m/M = 1$. Further, for the rating entity that provided the most recent rating, $m = 1$ and $m/M = 1/20$.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 22, line 9 to read as follows:

Further, to seed a reputation system by recursively determining a rater reputation of a first entity, the expected rating for each first rating provided by the first entity may be determined by applying the following equation:

$$\text{Equation 18: } E_i^{\text{ratee}} = \frac{1}{D} \circ \sum_{i=1-C/2}^{i-1+C/2} R_{i-1}^{\text{ratee}},$$

where R_{i-1} is the ratee reputation of the rated entity at $i-1$, D is the range of allowed reputation values, $1/C$ is the change rate factor and E_i^{ratee} [ratee] is the determined expect rating.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 22, line 16 to read as follows:

Fig. 4 is a data flow diagram illustrating an example embodiment of a system 19 for generating a rater reputation 38. The rater reputation generator 20 may receive a request 21 from a user indicating a request for a first entity's reputation. In response to the user request 21, the rater reputation generator 20 may receive as input a first rater rating 26 and selected second ratings 28, and generate the resulting rater reputation 38 as output, for example, by performing Acts 2-5 of Fig. 2 [3]. In one implementation, the rater reputation generator 20 may also receive as input other rating predictabilities 49 to generate a resulting rater reputation 38 by averaging rating predictabilities, as described above in relation to Fig. 2.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 27, line 3 to read as follows:

Equation 19 may be considered a recursive estimation algorithm of Recursive Least Squares (RLS) with a forgetting factor of F . Equation 19 estimates recursively an average square deviation of an actual rating from an expected (i.e., estimated) rating described in more detail below in relation to Figs. 8 and 9. For more information regarding Recursive Least [Leased] Squares, please refer to Chapter 9 of "Lecture Notes and Non-Linear and Non-Stationary Time Series Analysis," by H. Madsen and J. Holst, Institute of Mathematical

Modeling (IMM), Technical University of Denmark, Lyngby, Denmark, 1998 (hereinafter the Madsen text), the contents of which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 29, line 11 to read as follows:

Fig. 7 is a data flow diagram illustrating an example embodiment of a system 79 for generating a rater reputation deviation. A rater reputation deviation generator 82 may receive as input an initial rater reputation 22, a rating predictability 46, an initial rater reputation deviation 80 and a forgetting factor 77 [34]. Rater reputation deviation generator 82 also may receive other rater reputations 24.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 30, line 3 to read as follows:

The forgetting factor 77 [34] may be stored as a constant in a reputation database or similar data structure as described below in relation to Fig. 18. The initial rater reputation 22, the rating predictability 46, the other rater reputations 24 and the initial rater reputation deviation 80 also may be stored in the reputation database or similar data structure. In response to receiving the rating predictability 46, the rater reputation deviation generator 82 may access the reputation database or similar data structure to access and retrieve values 22, 24, 80 and 77 [34], and generate rater reputation deviation 84. The rater reputation deviation 84 then may be stored in the reputation database or similar structure for later access.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 43, line 10 to read as follows:

In a next Act 154, the resulting adjustment matrix may be inverted to produce an inverted adjustment matrix. In a following Act 156, a weighting modification may be generated from the transposed multi-rating vector, an initial weighting vector and a result (e.g., an overall rating or other qualitative assessment). The weighting modification may be generated by applying the following equation:

Equation 30: $Z_{\text{mod}} = Y_i - X_i^T Z_{i-1}$

[Equation 30: $Z_{\text{mod}} Y_i - X_i^T Z_{i-1}$]

where Y_{t-1} is the initial weighting vector, Y_t is the result, and Z_{mod} is the weighting modification. The weighting modification represents a difference between the result Y_t and an estimated result, $X_t^T Z_{t-1}$, according to the initial weighting vector and the multi-rating vector.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 49, line 27 to read as follows:

Optionally, the first and second estimated ratee reputations [reputation] may be weighted by estimated ratee reputation deviations to calculate a weighted average. For example, to determine the third estimated ratee reputation, the following equation may be applied:

Equation 36:
$$R_3 = \frac{RD_1^{rater} \circ R_2 + RD_2^{[weight]rater} \circ R_1}{RD_1^{rater} + RD_2^{[weight]rater}} ;$$

where R_1 is the first estimated ratee reputation, R_2 is second estimated ratee reputation and R_3 is the third estimated ratee reputation. RD_1^{rater} is a first estimated ratee reputation deviation corresponding to the first estimated ratee reputation and may be determined by application of Equation 21 [34 or 35] as described above. $RD_2^{[weight]rater}$ is a second estimated ratee reputation deviation corresponding to the second estimated ratee reputation and may be determined by application of Equation 34 or 35 [21] as described above.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 50, line 9 to read as follows:

As described above in [is] relation to Equations [Figs] 21, 34 and 35, for a given estimated ratee reputation, a higher estimated ratee reputation deviation represents a lower reliability of the estimated ratee reputation and, conversely, a lower estimated ratee reputation deviation represents a higher reliability of the estimated ratee reputation. Therefore, if both the first and second estimated ratee reputations were weighted according to their respective ratee reputation deviations, the ratee reputation with a higher deviation and lower reliability would be given more weight (i.e., have a greater impact) in generating the third estimated ratee reputation, which consequently would generate a less reliable third estimated ratee reputation than that defined by Equation 36.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 50, line 24 to read as follows:

Fig. 17 is a data flow diagram illustrating an example embodiment of a system 700 for generating an estimated ratee reputation[generator]. The system 700 may include a reputation database 726 and an estimated ratee reputation generator 706 that includes a first ratee reputation estimator 708 and a second ratee reputation estimator 712. The reputation database 726 may be a reputation database or similar data structure as described below in relation to Fig. 18.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 51, line 1 to read as follows:

The estimated ratee reputation generator 706 may receive ratee attribute reputations 702 and a ratee ID 704. The ratee attribute reputations 702 may be determined, as described above, from attributes corresponding to transactions with a first entity, and the ratee ID 704 may indicate the first entity. The estimated ratee reputation generator 706 may use the ratee ID 704 to access, from reputation database 726, weighting values 718, first estimated ratee reputation deviation 720, second estimated ratee reputation [deviation] 722 and second estimated ratee reputation deviation 724. The estimated ratee reputation generator 706 may use values 718, 720, 722 and 724 to generate a third estimated ratee reputation 714, for example, as described above in relation to Fig. 16.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 51, line 11 to read as follows:

The first ratee reputation estimator 708 may receive the one or more ratee attribute reputations 702 and the weighting values 718, and generate the second estimated ratee reputation 710, for example, as described above in relation to Act 606 of the Fig. 16.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 51, line 14 to read as follows:

The second ratee reputation estimator 712 may receive the first estimated ratee reputation deviation 720, the first [second] estimated ratee reputation 722, [and] the second estimated ratee reputation deviation 724 and the second estimated ratee reputation 710, and generate the third estimated ratee reputation 714, for example, as described above in relation to Act 610 of Fig. 16.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 52, line 5 to read as follows:

Figure 18 is a data flow diagram illustrating an example system architecture 209 for implementing the methods, systems and variations thereof described above in relation to Figs. 2-

17. The system 209 may include a client 210, a server 212, ratee [a rater] reputation database 234, an authentication I.D. database 236 and a rater reputation database 238. The components 210, 212, 234, 236 and 238 of the system 209 may have a variety of configurations. For example, all these components may reside on a single computer, or any combination thereof may reside on a separate computer or multiple computers interconnected, for example, by a network. Further, any combination of these components may reside on separate networks, including separate LANs (Local Area Networks), MANs (Metropolitan Area Networks) and WANs (Wide Area Networks).

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 55, line 4 to read as follows:

Further, the server 212, through the frontend 230, may receive a user query 216 from the client 210. For example, the user query may be requesting the rater reputations of one or more entities, the ratee reputations of one or more entities, or the personalized ratee reputation of one or more entities from the perspective of a particular entity. The server 212 [230] may convert the user query 216 into a database query, for example, a ratee query 240 or a rater query 248, and send the database query to the appropriate database. The server 212 [230] then may send the query results 218 to the client 210.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 55, line 11 to read as follows:

The server 212 [230] may be part of an on-line marketplace, for example, an agent-mediated marketplace. Accordingly, the client may request and receive marketplace information 220 from the server 230. Further, the server 212 [230], as part of a transaction between an entity corresponding to the client 210 and a counterpart entity, may send communications 222 to the client 210. The communications 222 may include notifications pertaining to the current transaction, prompts for information from the entity corresponding to the client 210, reputations of the counterpart entity, and other information about the entity including demographic data, weighting values, etc.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on of page 55, line 22 to read as follows:

The client 210 may include a user interface to allow interaction between a user and an application, for example, a reputation application or marketplace application implemented using

the client 210 and server 212 [230]. The user interface may involve using CGI scripts to generate web pages in accordance with any of a variety of markup languages such as, for example, HTML, XML or SGML.

MARKED-UP CLAIMS

1. (Once Amended) A method of [determining] ascribing a ratee reputation [of] to a first entity, comprising computer-implemented acts of:

(A) receiving a first rating of the first entity by a second entity;

(B) accessing [one or more rater reputations,] a first rater reputation [of the one or more rater reputations being a first rater reputation] representing a reputation of the second entity as a qualitative rater of other entities; and

(C) generating a ratee reputation of the first entity, comprising

(1) combining the [one or more] first rater [reputations] reputation and the first rating.

2. (Once Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of:

(D) accessing one or more second ratings provided for the first entity, each second rating provided by [an] a respective associated entity,

wherein Act (C) further comprises:

(2) combining the second ratings with the first rating.

3. (Once Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein Act (D)[(C)](2) comprises:

(a) calculating an average of the first and second ratings.

4. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, [wherein each second rating corresponds to one of the rater reputations] further comprising:

(E) for each second rating, accessing a rater reputation of the associated entity that provided the second rating, the rater reputation representing a reputation of the associated entity as a qualitative rater of other entities, and

wherein act D[(C)](2)(a) comprises:

(i) weighting each second rating with the rater reputation of its associated entity and weighting the first rating with [its corresponding] the first rater reputation such that the calculated average is a weighted average.

5. (Once Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of:

(D) receiving an initial ratee reputation [signal] indicating a ratee reputation of the first user prior to the reception of the first rating,

wherein act (C) further comprises:

2[(1)] generating a ratee reputation adjustment from the first rating and the [first] initial rater reputation [signal]; and

3[(2)] adding the ratee reputation adjustment to the initial ratee reputation [signal].

6. (Once Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising acts of:

(E) determining a damping factor as a negative function of the initial ratee reputation [signal],

wherein act (C) further comprises:

4[(3)] determining a ratee reputation modification to be applied to the initial ratee reputation [signal] based on the first rating [signal], the [first] initial rater reputation [signal] and the damping factor, and

wherein act (C)[(1)](2) comprises generating the ratee reputation adjustment from the ratee reputation modification.

7. (Once Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising acts of:

(E) determining an expected rating by dividing a value of the initial ratee reputation [signal] by a maximum ratee reputation value; and

(F) subtracting the expected rating from [a value of] the first rating [signal] to produce a rating difference,

wherein, if the rating difference is a positive value, then the ratee reputation adjustment is a positive value, thereby resulting in an increase in the ratee reputation of the first entity from the initial ratee reputation, and

wherein, if the rating difference is a negative value, then the ratee reputation adjustment is a negative value, thereby resulting in a decrease in the ratee reputation of the first entity from the initial ratee reputation.

8. (Once Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of:

(D) determining whether to transact with the first entity based on the [determined] generated ratee reputation of the first entity.

9. (Once Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of:

(D) determining a price to pay for a good or service offered by the first entity based at least in part on the [determined] generated ratee reputation of the first entity.

10. (Once Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of:

(D) determining a price to pay for insuring a quality of a good or service offered by the first entity based at least in part on the [determined] generated ratee reputation of the first entity.

11. (Once Amended) A system for [determining] ascribing a ratee reputation [of] to a first entity, the system comprising:

a ratee reputation generator to receive as input a first rating of the first entity by a second entity, to access [one or more rater reputations comprising] a first rater reputation representing a reputation of the second entity as a qualitative rater of other entities, to generate a ratee reputation of the first entity by combining the [one or more] first rater [reputations] reputation and the first rating, and to provide as output the generated ratee reputation.

12. (Once Amended) A system for [determining] ascribing a ratee reputation [of] to a first entity, the system comprising:

means for receiving a first rating of the first entity by a second entity;

means for accessing [one or more rater reputations ,] a first rater reputation [of the one or more rater reputations being a first rater reputation] representing a reputation of the second entity as a qualitative rater of other entities; and

means for generating a ratee reputation of the first entity by combining the [one or more] first rater [reputations] reputation and the first rating.

13. (Once Amended) A computer program product comprising:

a computer readable medium; and

computer readable signals stored on the computer readable medium that define instructions that, as a result of being executed by a computer, instruct the computer to perform a method of [determining] ascribing a ratee reputation [of] to a first entity, the method comprising:

(A) receiving a first rating of the first entity by a second entity;

(B) accessing [one or more rater reputations,] a first rater reputation [of the one or more rater reputations being a first rater reputation] representing a reputation of the second entity as a qualitative rater of other entities; and

(C) generating a ratee reputation of the first entity, comprising:

(1) combining the [one or more] first rater [reputations] reputation and the first rating.